

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USNATO 5681

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NATO

SUBJECT: THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE: HIND SIGHT AND FORESIGHT

1. IN LOOKING BACK OVER THE PAST TWENTY MONTHS, I THINK THE U.S. AND ITS ATLANTIC PARTNERS CAN TAKE SATISFACTION FROM SEVERAL MAJOR PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SUBSTANTIVE ACHIEVEMENTS. IN THE FORMER CATEGORY, I WOULD PUT THE ATLANTIC DECLARATION WHICH PROMPTED A THOROUGH IF SOMETIMES AGONIZING RETHINKING OF OLD CANT AND

NEW PROBLEMS, AND OF HOW THE ALLIANCE CAN COLLECTIVELY AND EFFECTIVELY COPE WITH A CHANGING PRESENT AND INCREASINGLY UNCERTAIN FUTURE. WHATEVER THE PUBLIC RELATIONS BENEFITS OF THE DECLARATION--AND THEY WERE CONSIDERABLE--THE FACT THAT AGREEMENT WAS ACHIEVED BY ALL FIFTEEN ALLIES HELPED SUPPRESS

THE OFT-HEARD PROCLAMATIONS THAT NATO WAS SCLEROTIC WITH AGE,
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DIVIDED BY U.S.-EUROPEAN DISSENSION AND RENDERED UNNECESSARY BY DETENTE. AT THE SAME TIME, THE DECLARATION PROVIDED NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR STRESSING THE THEMES OF EXPANDED CONSULTATIONS, GREATER EFFICIENCIES IN DEFENSE PLANNING, MORE

SYSTEMATIC RELATIONSHIPS WITH ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES IN ALLIED PARLIAMENTS, AND A MORE REALISTIC APPROACH TO EVENTS IN THE NON-NATO WORLD. IT ALSO OFFERED AN OPPORTUNITY TO BRING ALLIED HEADS OF GOVERNMENT TOGETHER FOR THE SECOND TIME IN NATO'S FIRST QUARTER-CENTURY.

2. IN THE MORE SUBSTANTIVE AREA OF DEFENSE, THE UNITED STATES HAS CONTINUED, WITH MEASURABLE SUCCESS, TO PRESS THE VIEW THAT NATO'S CONVENTIONAL FORCES PROVIDE BOTH THE MAJOR DETERRENT AGAINST CONVENTIONAL ATTACK AND THE FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE IF DETERRENCE EVER FAILS.

WHILE SOME OF OUR ALLIES COULD PROVIDE MORE RESOURCES TO NATO DEFENSE,

COLLECTIVE ALLIANCE PERFORMANCE HAS GENERALLY MET U.S. EXPECTATIONS.

U.S. CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATO'S DEFENSE HAVE CONTINUED TO INCREASE ESPECIALLY IN QUALITATIVE TERMS DESPITE POST-VIETNAM GENERAL FORCE REDUCTIONS. THE EUROPEAN ALLIES HAVE IN FACT ASSUMED A GREATER PROPORTION OF THE COLLECTIVE DEFENSE; THEY INCREASED THEIR TOTAL DEFENSE BUDGETS BY A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT IN REAL TERMS FROM 1970 TO 1973,

AND NATO'S CONVENTIONAL FORCES HAVE UNDERGONE A MODERNIZATION WHICH REFLECTS THESE EFFORTS. MOREOVER, ALLIED EFFORTS WERE SUFFICIENT TO HELP TO AVOID THE TROOP-CUT PROVISIONS OF THE HACKSON-NUNN AMENDMENT WITH ALL OF THE NEGATIVE IMPACT SUCH CUTS WOULD HAVE HAD ON ALLIED SECURITY AND COHESION AND ON THE ALLIANCE'S NEGOTIATING POSITION IN MBFR.

3. NATO'S ABILITY TO ADAPT AND GROW HAS BEEN EVIDENT IN THE EXPANSION--BOTH VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL--IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE CHALLENGES OF MODERN SOCIETY(CCMS). A PRODUCT OF U.S. LEADERSHIP IN THE LATE 60'S, THE CCMS HAS MOVED EFFECTIVELY INTO AREAS, ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY, ENERGY CONSERVATION, HIGHWAY SAFETY--THAT ARE NOW TOP PRIORITY ITEMS ON DOMESTIC NATIONAL AGENDAS IN EVERY ALLIED CAPITAL.

4. A GREATER SENSE OF COMMON PURPOSE AMONG THE ALLIES HAS RESULTED FROM A GROWING ACCEPTANCE THAT CURRENT PROBLEMS CANNOT BE DEALT WITH
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BY NATIONS ACTING ALONE, SUCCESSFUL RESISTANCE TO PRESSURES FOR UNILATERAL U.S. TROOP REDUCTIONS AND FAVORABLE CHANGES IN KEY ALLIED GOVERNMENTS. EQUALLY IMPORTANT WAS THE CONTINUING AWARENESS THAT--EVEN WHEN NEGOTIATING DETENTE IN A BUSINESSLIKE, UNPOLEMIC FASHION--THE SOVIET UNION IS A TOUGH, ENERGETIC, AND CONSIDERABLY LESS THAN ALTRUISTIC BARGAINING PARTNER.

5. WE CAN ALSO CREDIT A GROWING MATURITY, HOWEVER SLOW IN COMING IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE EC-NINE. WHILE EUROPEAN COALESCENCE HAS PROGRESSED BY FITS AND STARTS, AND U.S. ACCOMMODATION TO IT MUST BE BASED ON SYMPATHETIC SELF-INTEREST, THE VERY EXISTENCE OF NATO HAS MADE IT EASIER FOR EUROPEANS, NORTH AMERICANS AND OTHER NON-EC ALLIANCE

MEMBERS TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER AND TO SUBMERGE SERIOUS DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE LARGER INTERESTS AND FOR THE TOTAL BENEFIT OF THE FIFTEEN.

MOREOVER, NATO'S EXISTENCE HAS PERMITTED THE U.S. TO DEAL WITH A GROWING EUROPE WHILE RETAINING A FULL SAY IN SECURITY AND OTHER ARRANGEMENTS CONCERNING THIS AREA VITAL TO U.S. NATIONAL INTERESTS.

6. A LOOK AT THE PROBLEMS FACING THE U.S. AND ITS ALLIES, HOWEVER, SHOULD DISPEL ANY FEELING OF COMFORT OR FALSE CONFIDENCE GENERATED BY ANY RECENT SUCCESSES.

7. PERHAPS THE MOST PRESSING AND AT THE SAME TIME LEAST TRACTABLE OF THESE PROBLEMS IS THE DOUBLE-DIGIT INFLATION AND THE OIL-FUELED BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEMS WHICH NOW AFFLICTS EVERY ALLIED COUNTRY. NOT ONLY HAVE MOUNTING ECONOMIC PROBLEMS EXERTED STRONG PARLIAMENTARY AND POPULAR PRESSURES ON ALL ALLIED DEFENSE BUDGETS, THEY HAVE BROUGHT INSTABILITY AND CHANGE TO SOME ALLIED GOVERNMENTS AND THE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THEIR LEADERS MUST OPERATE. MOREOVER, WHILE THE WESTERN NATIONS, WITH INTER-DEPENDENT, TRADE-ORIENTED ECONOMICS, FACE GROWING PROBLEMS AND UNCERTAINTIES, COMMUNIST COUNTRIES SEEM SOMEHOW LESS AFFECTED BY ECONOMIC PROBLEMS--PARTICULARLY INsofar AS CONTINUED HIGH LEVELS OF DEFENSE SPENDING ARE CONCERNED.

8. AS A RESULT OF ACUTE ECONOMIC PRESSURES, AGE-OLD NATIONALISTIC FEUDS,
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AND RESIDUAL COLONIAL PROBLEMS, THE ALLIANCE HAS FOUND ITSELF SUDDENLY CONFRONTED WITH MOUNTING INSTABILITY ALONG ITS ENTIRE SOUTHERN/MEDITERRANEAN FLANK. WITH WESTERN INFLUENCE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA ALREADY WEAKENED BY THE ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE, THE ALLIANCE HAS RECENTLY HAD TO DEAL WITH THE GREEK-TURKISH CLASH OVER CYPRUS, AND GREECE'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF WITHDRAWAL FROM NATO'S INTEGRATED MILITARY STRUCTURE. THUS, ALTHOUGH THE ALLIANCE WOULD HAVE DRAWN INTERNAL POLITICAL STRENGTH FROM THE REPLACEMENT OF THE "COLONEL'S REGIME" WITH A MORE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN ATHENS, THE GREEK WITHDRAWAL HAS LEFT NATO POTENTIALLY WEAKER IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN THAN AT ANY TIME IN ITS HISTORY. THIS GLOOMY SITUATION IS RENDERED ONLY SLIGHTLY BRIGHTER BY CURRENT PROSPECTS FOR PEACE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE ARABS, AND BY PRESIDENT SADAT'S REJECTION OF GROWING SOVIET INFLUENCE IN EGYPT.

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USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

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9. IN PORTUGAL, THE OUSTER OF A 50-YEAR OLD AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENT WHICH BROUGHT HOPEFUL PROSPECTS FOR DECOLONIZATION AND A FREER DOMESTIC REGIME HAVE GIVEN RISE TO INCREASING CONCERN ABOUT STOPPING THE DETERIORATION OF THE PORTUGUESE POLITICAL SITUATION ANYWHERE SHORT OF A NEW--AND ANTI-NATO--AUTHORITARIANISM OF THE RADICAL LEFT.

10. IN ITALY, WHERE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN TRADITIONALLY PERMITTED TO PURSUE ITS INEFFICIENT AND INEFFECTIVE WAYS SO LONG AS THE ECONOMY RETAINED ITS FVIGOR, A COMBINATION OF EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL FACTORS HAS LED NATO'S FOURTH MOST-POPULOUS COUNTRY, AND A KEY ELEMENT IN MEDITERRANEAN SECURITY, TO THE VERGE OF BANKRUPTCY AND TO THE BRINK OF A POLITICAL EXPERIMENTATIONS WHICH COULD ONLY BE DANAGING TO THE ALLIANCE AND TO ITS STRATEGIC POSITION.

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11. THESE ARE LARGER ISSUES; ONES WHICH NATO ALONE CANNOT TACKLE. WHATEVER NATO'S ROLE IN THEIR SOLUTION, THEY WILL CLEARLY REQUIRE STRONG U.S. LEADERSHIP,--BOTH IN BILATERAL DIPLOMACY AND IN MULTI-LATERAL BODIES SUCH AS THE NORTH ATLANTIC ALLIANCE.

12. ADDED TO RAPID CHANGE IN OTHER AREAS, THERE REMAINS A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF VINTAGE ITEMS ON THE NATO AGENDA. THESE MUST ALSO COMMAND THE U.S. ATTENTION IF THE POLITICAL WILL OF THE ALLIANCE AND FORWARD MOVEMENT ON KEY ISSUES (DEFENSE PLANNING, AND NUCLEAR POLICY, MBFR, AND CSCE) ARE TO BE MAINTAINED.

13. IN THE DEFENSE AREA, WE MUST CONTINUE TO EMPHASIZE THAT NATO PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE FOCUS ON BETTER USE OF EXISTING RESOURCES. MORE FLEXIBLE, COOPERATIVE AND INTERGRATE USE OF DEFENSE RESOURCES CAN IMPROVE ALLIANCE CONVENTIONAL FORCES AND FAVORABLY INFLUENCE THE ATTITUDES OF THE ALLIED PARLIAMENTS

--

AND OF THE ALLIED TAXPAYERS WHO MUST ULTIMATELY PAY THE BILLS.

14. NATO'S IMMEDIATE CHALLENGE IN DEFENSE PLANNING IS TO TRANSLATE FUZZY THESES AND VAGUE CONCEPTS INTO ACTION PROGRAMS THAT ALLIED GOVERNMENTS CAN AND WILL IMPLEMENT. WE WILL NO DOUBT FIND RELUCTANCE BY ONE OR MORE ALLIES NOT EXCLUDING THE U.S., TO SUBORDINATE COMMERCIAL, BUREAUCRATIC AND OTHER PAROCHIAL INTERESTS TO COMMON ALLIANCE REQUIREMENTS IN A TIME OF SEVERE ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS, "GO IT ALONE" MENTALITIES COULD--AS IS WORST CASE--TRIGGER A VICIOUS CYCLE OF INADEQUATE NATIONAL DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENTS,

UNCOORDINATED ALLIANCE FORCE POSTURES, DEFEATIST PERCEPTIONS ABOUT NATO-WARSAW PACT CONVENTIONAL RELATIVE FORCE CAPABILITIES, AND FURTHER REDUCTIONS IN NATIONAL DEFENSE BUDGETS. NO ALLIANCE MEMBER CAN UNILATERALLY MEET ITS SECURITY REQUIREMENT. NATO NATIONS MUST TRANSMIT THIS MESSAGE WITH UNMISTAKABLE CLARITY.

15. THIS YEAR, THE UNITED STATES IS RECOMMENDING TO ALLIED DEFENSE MINISTERS A BROADER APPROACH TO NATO DEFENSE PLANNING. IF THIS US INITIATIVE IS ACCEPTED, IT WILL HELP TO DRAW TOGETHER THE DISPARATE PLANNING ACTIVITIES OF ALLIANCE POLITICAL AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES, FOCUS GREATER ATTENTION ON BALANCING AND COMPLEMENTARY NATIONAL FORCES, AND PROVIDE A FRAMEWORK FOR ENABLING NATIONAL FORCES TO WORK TOGETHER MORE EFFECTIVELY
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IN AN ERA OF HOPED-FOR DETENTE AND OVER THE LONG HAUL. TO WORK PROPERLY, THE US PROPOSAL REQUIRES ALLIED CONSENSUS ON WHERE NATO DEFENSE SHOULD BE IN THE EARLY 1980'S AND ON HOW ONGOING PLANNING ACTIVITIES AND FORCE IMPROVEMENTS CONTRIBUTE TO THIS GOAL. ACHIEVING SUCH CONSENSUS AMONG ALLIES WITH WIDELY DIVERSE GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURES, SOCIETIES AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE EXTERNAL THREAT WILL NOT BE EASY. DEVELOPMENT OF SUCH A CONSENSUS WOULD HOWEVER, REVITALIZE THE TRANSATLANTIC SECURITY RELATIONSHIP.

16. ON MBFR, ALLIANCE COHESION HAS BEEN NOTEWORTHY BOTH IN BRUSSELS AND VIENNA, AND THE PREPARATION OF NEGOTIATING POSITIONS REMAINS A MAJOR ACTIVITY AT SEVERAL LEVELS WITHIN THE ALLIANCE. TO MAINTAIN MOMENTUM AND ALLIED SOLIDARITY, WE WILL NEED TO RECONCILE OUR OWN MBFR GOALS WITH THE INTERESTS OF OUR EUROPEAN ALLIES WHO, WHILE ALSO UNDER PRESSURE FOR DEFENSE CUTS, ARE DOUBLY CONCERNED THAT EASTERN RECIPROCITY ACCOMPANY ANY NEGOTIATED WESTERN REDUCTIONS--AND WHO ALSO WISH TO INSURE THAT INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS ON TROOP LIMITATIONS ACHIEVED IN THE MBFR CONTEXT DO NOT SMOTHER

OR TRUNCATE THEIR LONG-RANGE HOPES FOR A UNITED EUROPE THAT CAN DEFEND ITSELF.

17. WHILE THE U.S. HAS PLAYED A LESSER ROLE IN CSCE THAN IN MBFR, ITS WILLINGNESS TO WORK WITH THE ALLIES, AND PARTICULARLY WITH THE WELL-COORDINATED NEGOTIATING EFFORT OF THE EC-NINE, HAS DONE MUCH TO STRENGTHEN THE WESTERN BARGAINING POSITION. RECENT COMPROMISE BETWEEN U.S. AND EC PROPOSALS FOR DEALING WITH BASKET III SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO WESTERN COHESION AS THE GENEVA TALKS ENTER THEIR CRITICAL FINAL PHASE.

18. IN ALLIANCE CONSULTATIONS ON THE STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TALKS (SALT), THE U. S. HAS SET AN EXEMPLARY RECORD FOR DISCUSSIONS ON A SENSITIVE, BILATERAL ARMS NEGOTIATION. SUCH DISCUSSIONS, AND THOSE IN THE NPG, HAVE ALLAYED FEARS OF A U.S.-SOVIET AGREEMENT "OVER THE HEADS" OF THE ALLIES AND OF UNILATERAL SHIFTS IN NUCLEAR POLICY IN AREAS OF CENTRAL IMPORTANCE TO THE ALLIANCE. THROUGH CONTINUING CONSULTATION IN SALT, IN THE NPG AND IN OTHER ALLIANCE FORA, WE CAN MAINTAIN THIS LEVEL OF TRUST, AND UNDERSTANDING, AND THUS PREVENT THE WHOLE MESSY "NATO NUCLEAR QUESTION"--WHICH SO DOMINATED U.S.-EUROPEAN POLICY DURING THE MID-60'S--FROM SURFACING AGAIN.
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19. AS WE HEAD TOWARD THE 1980'S WE SHOULD REMEMBER THAT THE U.S. REMAINS THE BULWARK OF EUROPE, THE MOST STABLE AND STALWART OF NATO'S 15 MEMBER COUNTRIES AND THAT IT DISPOSES OF POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY RESOURCES WHICH OUR ALLIES, INDIVIDUALLY OR COLLECTIVELY, CAN NEVER HOPE TO MATCH. TO THE DEGREE WE EMPLOY THESE RESOURCES, PRUDENTLY, SKILLFULLY, PATIENTLY AND IN THE FULL SPIRIT OF ALLIANCE PARTNERSHIP WE SHALL EASILY RETAIN THE LEADERSHIP THAT HAS MADE OF NATO A SUCCESSFUL INSTRUMENT OF U.S. POLICY. ONLY WITH STEADY U.S. LEADERSHIP, CAN WE MAINTAIN THE RESPECT AND CONFIDENCE NECESSARY TO PURSUE THOSE GOALS OF MULTILATERAL ACTION IN THE POLITICAL AND DEFENSE AREAS WHICH ARE SO VITAL TO OUR OWN NATIONAL INTEREST AND TO THE SECURITY OF OUR PARTNER-STATES. AND LEADERSHIP THRIVES ON SENSIBLE IDEAS PRESUASIVELY PUT FORWARD--AGAIN AN AREA WHERE THE ALLIES LOOK TO OUR ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY AND TO OUR MORE GLOBAL OUTLOOK AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO STIMULATE U.S. APPROACHES TO PROBLEMS THAT BESET THEM.

20. U.S. LEADERSHIP IN IDEAS EXPECTED AND IS NECESSARY IN SEVERAL AREAS OF NATO ACTIVITY--SOME NEW, SOME OLD--WHICH ARE IMPORTANT BUT WHERE RECENT ACTIVITY HAS BEEN AT HALF-THROTTLE. SOME THOUGHTS ON WHAT CAN AND SHOULD BE DONE FOLLOW SEPARATELY. U.S. CONTRIBUTIONS WILL STRENGTHEN THE ALLIANCE AND THE NATO INSTITUTION WHICH SUPPLEMENT WASHINGTON'S BILATERAL RELATIONS AND GIVE THE U.S., AND EXTRAORDINARILY VALUABLE MEANS TO CONSTRUCTIVELY AFFECT THE FUTURE OF THE ATLANTIC NATIONS.
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